

MAY 02 2007

REMARKS

In the Office Action dated November 11, 2006, the Examiner rejected claims 1-3, 6, 7, and 11-17 under § 102(b) as anticipated in view of Faggin et al. ("Faggin," U.S. Pat. No. 5,920,310) and rejected claims 4, 5 and 8-10 under § 103(a) as unpatentable over Faggin in view of Caldwell (U.S. Pub No. 2005/0020062A1).

In response to the Office Action, Applicants have deleted claims 1-17 and have added new claims 18-22. New claim 18 is directed to an electronic device 2. The electronic device 2 includes a touch pad module 1 having a touch pad unit 11 that is flexible and that is mounted flexibly on a peripheral wall 212 of the casing 21. These claimed features of the present invention permit the touch pad unit 11 to be applied to curved or non-flat surfaces of casings 21 of electronic devices 2. Neither the admitted prior art nor the actual invention of Faggin discloses a flexible touch pad unit 11 mounted flexibly on a peripheral wall 212 of a casing 21 of an electronic device 2.

In Faggin, the drawbacks associated with making touch pads too thin are discussed repeatedly. For example, in column 3, lines 43-45 of Faggin, it is stated that the circuit board cannot practically be made thinner than about 1.4 mm or it will flex perceptively under use. Hence, the actual invention of Faggin is made with the purpose of *not* flexing. For example, with reference to Fig. 11 and column 8, lines 32-38 thereof, only a minimally sized through hole 94 is formed in a region of thinner cross section 90, in which the through hole 94 is used for passage therethrough of the touch pad module control electronics 88. This ensures that the touch pad module 86 will not flex. This non-flexibility of the actual invention of Faggin goes against a stated objective of the present invention as well as the abovementioned feature of the flexible touch pad unit 11 being mounted flexibly on the peripheral wall 212 of new claim 18.

Further, in the admitted prior art of Figs. 1-8 and in the actual invention of Faggin, the touch pad is shown and described as being mounted in a palm rest portion of a laptop computer, and not on a peripheral wall 212 of a casing 21 of an electronic device 2, as required by new claim 18.

As another feature of new claim 18, the control circuit unit 12 recognizes the contact signals 110 as at least one of push button signals and volume control signals, support for which may be found on page 7, lines 11-16 of the instant specification. Since Faggin is concerned with

touch pad modules applied to laptops, there is no disclosure therein of using the touch pad module to perform any function other than that of a pointing device.

Yet another feature of new claim 18 involves the electrical coupling unit 13. Namely, in new claim 18, the electrical coupling unit 13 is defined as having a first end coupled to the touch pad unit 11 (of the touch pad module 1) and a second end coupled to the control circuit unit 12 (of the touch pad module 1). To negate the novelty of this feature, the Examiner directs our attention to the flat flexible cable 118 of Fig. 14 of Faggin and maintains that this element is equivalent to the electrical coupling unit 13 of the claimed present invention. However, the flexible cable 118 of Faggin is connected on one end to the connection pads 124 (of the touch pad) and on its other end to the "internal workings of the electronic device," as described at the end of the first full paragraph of column 9 thereof.

The admitted prior art of Faggin also fails to teach the above feature of new claim 18. For example, in the admitted prior art of Fig. 8 of Faggin, one end of the flexible cable is connected to the touch pad sensor surface 56 and its other end to the connector 66. That is, there is the intervening element of the connector 66 between the other end of the flexible cable and the touch pad control electronics 64 in this admitted prior art configuration of Faggin.

For any one of at least the above reasons, Faggin fails to anticipate new claim 18 of this application.

In new dependent claim 19, the electrical coupling unit 13 is limited to a ribbon cable. Faggin fails to teach this feature of new dependent claim 19 for the same reasons as discussed directly above.

In new claim 20, we claim a handheld electronic device 2. As discussed above, Faggin is concerned with touch pad modules as used in laptop computers and no other application is disclosed therein.

Furthermore, in new claim 20, the control circuit unit 12 is defined as being separate from the main board 22, and the touch pad module 1 includes the additional element of a transmission interface 14 that electrically couples the control circuit unit 12 to the main board 22.

In the admitted prior art of Fig. 8 of Faggin, the touch pad control electronics 64 are a part of the host system (and not separate therefrom), and the touch pad sensor surface 56 is connected to the touch pad control electronics 64 through the connector 66. That is, in the configuration of Fig. 8 of Faggin, the flexible sensor surface 56 of the touch pad is connected to

RECEIVED
CENTRAL FAX CENTER

MAY 02 2007

the touch pad control electronics 64 of the touch pad through the connector 66 of the touch pad. Hence, the transmission interface 14 of new claim 20 is used for the purpose of electrically intercoupling an element of the touch pad module 1 to an element of the electronic device 2, while the connector 66 of Fig. 8 of Faggin is used for the purpose of electrically intercoupling two elements of the touch pad itself.

There is no disclosure of a transmission interface in the actual invention of Faggin.

Because claims 21 and 22 depend from claim 20, they are allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 20.

SUMMARY

Pending Claims 18-22 as amended are patentable. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner grant early allowance of this application. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney for the Applicants via telephone if such communication would expedite this application.

Respectfully submitted,



Anastasia Heffner
Registration No. 47,638
Attorney for Applicant

BRINKS HOFER GILSON & LIONE
P.O. BOX 10395
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60610
(312) 321-4200